



Natural Resources Conservation Service
655 Parfet Street, Room E200C
Lakewood, Colorado 80215

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

March 15, 2007

Re: LTP - Announcement of Program Funding - 2007 Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program

Dear Conservation Partners:

The 2007 Announcement of Program Funding for the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) was posted on www.grants.gov March 14, 2007. The full announcement will soon be available on our National website at: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/frpp>.

In addition, our Colorado Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) website will have links to the announcement, the "2007 Colorado FRPP Scoring System" and the "2007 Colorado FRPP Proposal Checklist" (see: <http://www.co.nrcs.usda.gov>).

The FRPP is a voluntary program designed to protect certain high value farm and ranch lands through the use of permanent conservation easements. Applicants and projects must demonstrate eligibility for participation in this program. Refer to the attached "2007 Colorado FRPP Proposal Checklist" for details.

- **Send proposals to:** Gary Finstad
Easements Coordinator
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
655 Parfet Street, Room E200C
Lakewood, CO 80215-5517
- **Proposals must be received by 4:00 pm Friday April 27 (MDT).** (*Postmarks will not be honored.*)
- **Please, submit one original and two copies of your proposal.**
- **Please, ignore the formatting/content requirements specified in the Announcement of Program Funding.**
Follow the guidance in the "2007 Colorado FRPP Proposal Checklist." Note that the "2007 Colorado FRPP Scoring System" is an Excel workbook, containing four different worksheets. Two are component parts of the scoring system: Part A - Program Information; and Part B - Parcel Information. The other two are scorecards—one will perform calculations automatically.

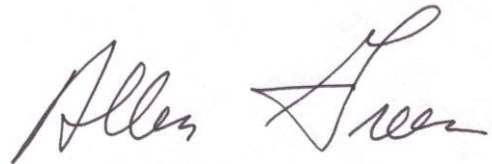
Helping People Help the Land

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- Please, submit a sample of the easement deed you propose to use with your proposal. It will help if you incorporate the requirements outlined in “2007 FRPP Cooperative Agreement Template” (expected to be available by early April).
- The “2007 Colorado FRPP Proposal Checklist” highlights elements that must be addressed in your proposal. Please, develop your proposal according to the format in the “Checklist.” *Scores will mirror the degree to which proposals succinctly convey the required information.* Proposals that provide all required information by the April 27 deadline will be accorded a higher priority for funding, even if they are eventually outscored by projects for which missing information is provided after the deadline.
- As a condition of receipt of FRPP funds, landowners must certify that they are in compliance with the highly erodible land (HEL) and wetland conservation provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985. This is accomplished by submitting Form “AD-1026, Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Certification” to the local USDA Farm Service Agency office. The certification applies to all agricultural lands owned or operated by the landowner, anywhere—not just the land proposed for FRPP funding.
- Farm Bill program participants are also subject to a limitation on non-farm adjusted gross income (AGI). Average AGI cannot exceed \$2.5M for the three tax years immediately proceeding the year in which the conservation easement is conveyed and where less than 75 percent of the average AGI is derived from farming, ranching, or forestry operations. Form “CCC-526, Payment Eligibility Average Adjusted Gross Income Certification” must be submitted to the local Farm Service Agency office.
- We will verify landowner status here, using a secure web-based application. It is important that landowners submit these documents early to allow sufficient time for FSA staff to process the information and get compliance settings set correctly in the system. (This may take up to four weeks in some cases, so consider this a word to the wise . . .)
- **Awards will be announced on or about May 30, 2007.** Awards will be based on a ranking of the applications by score—with exceptions made for (1) those that did not meet the deadline for submission of all required information and (2) projects that are judged not to be in the best interests of the program. There is no limit to the number of projects an applicant may submit for consideration, but Colorado will have only about \$1.25M to award in this cycle. FRPP funds must be obligated through a cooperative agreement as soon as possible after notification of the award. We’ll forward the new 2007 agreement template as soon as it’s available.

The attachments will be available soon on our Colorado home page: www.co.nrcs.usda.gov. Please contact Gary Finstad if you have any questions at (720) 544-2820 or email: gary.finstad@co.usda.gov. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Allen Green". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Allen" and the last name "Green" clearly distinguishable.

ALLEN GREEN
State Conservationist

Attachments

cc: Tim Carney, ASTC-P, NRCS, Lakewood, CO
Gary Finstad, Easements Coord, NRCS, Lakewood, CO
David Doty, AC, NRCS, Grand Junction, CO
LeRoy Hall, AC, NRCS, Grand Junction, CO
John Knapp, AC, NRCS, LaJunta, CO
Cathee Wilson, AC, NRCS, Monte Vista, CO
Colorado NRCS District Conservationists
Ed Neilson, ARC-P, NRCS, Grand Junction, CO
Jon Wicke, Acting ARC-P, NRCS, Greeley, CO
Lorenz Sutherland, ARC-P, NRCS, LaJunta, CO
Ted Lucero, ARC-P, NRCS, Monte Vista, CO
Wayne Jipsen, RC&D Coord., NRCS, Glenwood Springs, CO
Richard Mullaney, RC&D Coord., NRCS, Sterling, CO
Jeff Koster, RC&D Coord., NRCS, Hugo, CO
Tim Macklin, RC&D Coord., NRCS, Lamar, CO
Jim Mietz, RC&D Coord., NRCS, Lamar, CO
Jane Wustrow, RC&D Coord., NRCS, Pueblo, CO
Cindy Lair, State Conservation Board Mgr, CSCB, Lakewood, CO
Callie Hendrickson, Executive Vice President, CACD, Grand Junction, CO
Jill Ozarski, Executive Director, Colorado Coalition of Land Trusts, Denver, CO